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UNITED NATIONS TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY TAKES ACTIONS

A constructive but quiet Twelfth General Assembly of the UN was characterized particularly by its work in two areas: It establishes SPUR (Special Projects for Underdeveloped Regions); it pressed for disarmament in ways which reflected dimensions of the new nuclear-space age. Along with tremendous volume of regular work for human good it also: exposed communist-inspired charge of threat to Syria; reelected the Secretary General; stabilized UNEF support; strengthened refugee work renewing High Commissioner post.

I. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Twelfth Session of the General Assembly adopted by overwhelmingly favorable votes resolutions bringing about an expansion of technical assistance to the underdeveloped countries of the world.

Defeat of SUNFED - At the beginning of the session it was apparent that the United States would continue to oppose, as it had done since 1953, a UN capital investment fund referred to as SUNFED (Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development). This type of plan has been opposed by others of the larger potential contributors - Canada, German Federal Republic and the United Kingdom - on the ground that voluntary contributions to SUNFED would not come until resources could be freed through a beginning in the field of general disarmament.

Opposition to this line of reasoning has been vocal, however. The underdeveloped nations have no control over a disarmament agreement, only the big powers have this. Yet it is the "have-not" nations that must suffer. As one observer commented, "to tie disarmament beginning to the establishment of SUNFED is like refusing to help a drowning man until you find your water wings."

According to a memorandum issued by the C.C.I.A. (Commission of the Churches on International Affairs - a joint agency of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council) "ECOSOC at its 24th session (July-August 1957) adopted by a vote of 15 in favor to 3 against (Canada, United Kingdom, United States), a resolution urging the Twelfth Session of the Assembly to decide to establish the Special United Nations Fund and recommending the setting up of a preparatory commission to

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take the necessary steps and to select a limited number of projects to be financed through voluntary contributions on an experimental basis pending full operation of the Fund."

A spokesman for the U.S. Delegation made it clear early in the session that the U.S. "is not prepared at this time to support the establishment of a special United Nations capital fund." It was also made clear that the U.S. would oppose any resolution to set up a fund of this type and would not participate in a preparatory commission set up by the Twelfth General Assembly to draw up a charter for such a fund. "The limited resources that the fund could command under existing conditions," the U.S. delegate explained, "would inevitably be scattered and, to a considerable extent dissipated on relatively minor projects everywhere in the world without real impact on the development process anywhere." Since it was generally acknowledged that without U.S. financial support, SUNFED would not work, the plan did not become operative.

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, at the Eleventh Assembly had urged the establishment of "an effective international fund to help establish basic structures for international development . . . and for positive action, whether through the SUNFED proposal or a better alternative."

A resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches meeting in St. Louis December 1-6, 1957 said in part: "Greater use should be made of international agencies, such as the United Nations and regional organizations. Technical and economic aid, while related to other parts of foreign policy, should not be primarily for political and military considerations, but for the purpose of helping people to meet economic and social needs and opportunities. This Assembly advocates balanced, expanding programs of international aid and trade to the end that in this interdependent world its various peoples, all created and cared for by God, may have a more abundant life, with more well-being, knowledge, justice, freedom and peace."

Establishment of a Special United Nations Fund for Technical Assistance and Technical Development. - Some limited part of what the churches and others were advocating came into being during the Twelfth Assembly. Although opposed to the establishment of SUNFED, the U.S. developed a first step program for economic aid through expanding Technical Cooperation. An American spokesman speaking before the General Assembly's Economic Committee said "We propose that the United Nations' expanded technical assistance program be substantially increased; that it be enlarged from its present level of about $30,000,000 up to $100,000,000 a year."

It was the view of the U.S. delegation that part of the additional money would be used to "continue and extend existing types of programs, particularly in the newly-established countries." The remainder would go into a "special projects fund" to be "earmarked for such technical development projects as will provide concentration in depth on surveys, research, and training projects of basic importance to successful economic growth." A UN source explained that under this plan "the operations of the Fund shall more immediately be directed towards enlarging the scope of the United Nations programs of technical assistance so as to include special projects in certain basic fields." The fields are to be defined by a preparatory committee in such areas as intensive surveys of water, mineral and potential power resources. The Special Fund for Economic Development (an alternative plan to SUNFED but not a substitute for it) would also, according to the UN source, establish "training institutes in public administration, statistics and technology, and of agricultural and industrial research and productivity centers." The plan also states that "as and when the resources prospectively available are considered by the General Assembly to be sufficient to enter into the field of capital development, principally the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the less

developed countries, the General Assembly shall review the scope and future activities of the Fund and take such action as it may deem appropriate."

The U.S. spokesman said that his delegation "will of course vote in favor of this resolution which we had the honor of co-sponsoring." The reasons given for the favorable attitude were: (1) The resolution brings into being a "special Fund by the United Nations for a new and different approach to technical assistance and technical development to help meet the basic needs of less developed countries." While not subordinated to the present machinery of the Expanded Program of Technical Assistance - "the Fund would be integrally related to the existing United Nations programs of technical assistance and would make the fullest possible use of the existing technical assistance machinery." (In 1956, for instance, prior to the additional funds voted at the Twelfth Session of the General Assembly, the "technical assistance machinery" consisted of a vast network of the UN and seven specialized agencies in 103 countries and territories with a field expenditure of $25.3 million contributed by 77 nations of the world. The technical assistance system included the services of 2,346 experts and the provision of 2,128 fellowships or study grants.); (2) The U.S. delegate also pointed out that "the resolution clearly recognizes the need in the less developed countries for larger amounts of capital investment." It "leaves open the possibility of later action by the United Nations with respect to capital investment in the less developed countries as and when sufficient resources become prospectively available to enable it to enter into this field."

The Special Projects Fund is expected to start on January 1, 1959 after the findings of a study committee are reported to the Economic and Social Council, and after this latter group forwards the study committee's report to the General Assembly.

Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold praised the United Nations program of economic aid to less developed countries as "a major achievement" of the General Assembly's 1957 session. The $100,000,000 Special Projects Fund will greatly strengthen the existing UN programs. The United States will contribute nearly one-third of the money for the fund.

II. DISARMAMENT

Disarmament is considered by many to be the most important issue facing the world today and it certainly was one of the foremost issues to be dealt with at the Twelfth Session of the General Assembly, as it has been since 1946 when the Assembly set up the Atomic Energy Commission.

With a plentitude of statements from all geographical areas of the world and from many viewpoints, the Twelfth Assembly did not achieve any major solution for disarmament problems, but did take an unusual vote on matters of substance as well as procedure.

The Assembly requested that the UN Disarmament Commission continue to seek means of providing effective disarmament procedures and asked it to give priority to the six principal proposals put forward by the Western powers in August, 1957. These were summarized by The New York Times as: "(1) Immediate suspension of nuclear weapons tests with effective international control; (2) Cessation of production of fissionable materials for weapons; (3) Reduction of stocks; (4) Reduction of non-atomic armaments and armed forces; (5) Aerial and ground inspection to guard against surprise attacks; (6) Joint Study of an inspection system designed to insure that sending of objects into outer space would be exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes." The vote in favor of this course of action was 56 to 9, with 15 abstentions.

During the Twelfth Assembly the Soviet delegation proposed that the nuclear powers assume a temporary obligation for five years not to use nuclear weapons. But this was rejected in the Political Committee of the Assembly.

A resolution sponsored by Belgium calling for the cooperation of the Secretary General and the Disarmament Commission in a world-wide publicity campaign stressing the need for a disarmament agreement with effective controls passed by a vote of 71 to 9, with 1 abstention.

A Canadian-Japanese proposal to enlarge the Disarmament Commission resulted in much confusion and in a multitude of amendments. The final compromise resolution, the result of considerable button-holing behind the scenes, proposed that the eleven-member Disarmament Commission (made up of Security Council members) be expanded by fourteen members to twenty-five. This resolution passed by a vote of 60 to 9, with 11 abstentions. The Commission now consists of the eleven Security Council members (Canada, China, Colombia, France, Iraq, Japan, Panama, Sweden, U.S.S.R., U.K., and U.S.) and the fourteen new members named in the resolution who will serve until January 1, 1959 (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, India, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Tunisia, and Yugoslavia.).

A resolution offered by Albania which would have raised the size of the commission to thirty-two members was rejected by a vote of 38 to 19, with 19 abstentions. A Soviet proposal to raise the size of the commission to include all 82 members of the General Assembly was rejected 46 to 9, with 24 abstentions.

The Soviet Union flatly rejected the resolution creating a twenty-five member Disarmament Commission saying that it would abandon its position on an eighty-two member commission (an unworkable size for such a commission) and compromise. What the Soviets were after, observers agree, was a better balance on the Commission between Western nations and Communist and neutralist nations.

At present the Western powers are wondering what the U.S.S.R. will do when the twenty-five member Disarmament Commission meets shortly. The U.S.S.R. has announced that this Commission is "totally unacceptable" and has threatened to boycott it. Without the U.S.S.R., work on disarmament would be stalled and its failure to sit on the Commission would not help the U.S.S.R. propaganda position.

Time and again, the American churches through the Department of International Affairs and the churches of the world through the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, have backed disarmament talks and urged the atomic powers to seek a solution to the dilemma of what Winston Churchil once called a "balance of terror". In the summer of 1957, two interrelated statements on Atomic Tests and Disarmament were successfully adopted by the C.C.I.A. and the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches meeting at New Haven. At the General Assembly meeting of the National Council of Churches held at St. Louis last December, a statement of policy was voted reiterating the churches' concerns: "We hold that military might provides no sufficient security. While most of us think that our nation should maintain an adequate national defense, some of us feel that all armament is futile, but we all agree that even if there is a shield of arms, larger constructive work must be undertaken on many lines for peace with justice and freedom. Even when arming, our nation, we believe, must persistently seek workable agreements for universal, inspected, controlled, reduction and regulation of all armaments, including nuclear weapons. We believe that the accelerating arms race which now grips our world may lead directly to a war which will destroy civilization, and that efforts must be re-doubled to realize the final goal of world-wide disarmament in the framework of the United Nations."

III. MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL DECISIONS

Membership Developments. - During the Assembly session Malaya was admitted as the 82nd member of the United Nations by unanimous vote. Two other states - the Republic of Korea and South Vietnam were mentioned in a General Assembly resolution as being qualified for membership but they did not succeed in getting the required two-thirds favorable vote. The count on Korea was 51 to 9, in favor, with 21 abstantions; on South Vietnam 49 to 9, in favor, with 23 abstentions. A decision to postpone debate on whether the Nationalist or Communist government should represent China at the UN was postponed early in the session by a vote of 48 to 27, with 6 abstentions.

Secretary General - Dag Hammarskjold, receiving the enthusiastic support of the U.N. for his magnificent leadership during the past five years, was elected to a second five-year term as Secretary General. The reelection was assured by the unanimous recommendation of the Security Council and was subsequently approved by the General Assembly.

Assessments - With the addition of new members, the General Assembly unanimously approved the adoption of a new scale of assessments which reduced the United States contribution to the United Nations from 33.33 per cent to 32.51 per cent. The United States, it was reported, received "the largest reduction."

Budget - At a briefing held on September 15, 1957, two days before the opening of the Twelfth Assembly, a U.S. spokesman pointed out that the United States Congress did not reduce its contribution to any UN agency.

The budget adopted by the Assembly for the year 1958 amounted to $55,062,850. It was passed by a vote of 68 to 9, with 2 abstentions. A resolution was passed which authorized the Secretary General, with the approval of the Advisory Committee, to spend up to $2,000,000 for the maintenance of peace and security or for urgent economic rehabilitation should emergency situations arise. There was also established by unanimous agreement a working capital fund of $22,000,000 for 1958.

IV. SOME SELECTED DECISIONS AFFECTING TERRITORIAL UNITS

Algeria - A resolution presented directly to the General Assembly was adopted 80 to 0, with France and South Africa absent, referring to the Algerian crisis and hoping that negotiations would be entered into, or other means employed, "with a view to a solution, in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations."

Korea. On November 29, 1957, the General Assembly adopted a resolution which "reaffirms that the objectives of the United Nations are to bring about by peaceful means the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic Korea under a representative form of government and the full restoration of international peace and security in the area." The resolution urges that continuing efforts be made to this end and calls upon the Communist authorities concerned "to accept the established United Nations objectives in order to achieve a settlemant in Korea based on the fundamental principles for unification set forth by the nations participating on behalf of the United Nations in the Korean Political Conference held at Geneva in 1954 . . . " The Soviet Bloc voted against the resolution which was carried by a vote of 54 to 9, with 16 abstentions.

On October 27, 1957, Lt. Gen. John B. Coulter, Agent General of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency, told the General Assembly that "successful conclusion" of the agency's $143,000,000 aid program "is now close at hand." The New York Herald Tribune reported that General Coulter said that the majority of U.N.K.R.A. projects had been completed. "Most of the remaining ones will be finished by the end of the calendar year 1957, and only a very small number will carry over to the spring of 1958." U.N.K.R.A. has had the task, since its establishment on December 1, 1950 by the General Assembly, of helping the Koreans recover from the destruction of the war. It has supplied material and technical aid for the construction of mines, schools, housing and other projects. Exclusive of military aid, the Republic of Korea has received from July 1, 1950 to June 30, 1957 $1,914,900,000. Of this amount $617,400,000 came through the UN, including $143,000,000 committed by UNKRA mainly for investment in the projects, and $474,400,000 in relief assistance under the UN Emergency Relief Program, Gen. Coulter explained. The United States, through direct bilateral aid programs, has given $1,214,900,000.

South Africa - A resolution entitled "The Question of Race Conflict in South Africa Resulting from the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Union of South Africa" was passed by a vote of 59 in favor, 6 against, with 14 abstentions. The resolution deplored the fact that the Government of the Union of South Africa has not yet responded to the call and invitation of the General Assembly to live up to the obligations of the Charter of the United Nations which are interpreted as involving a revision of the policy of apartheid.

A second resolution calls upon the Government of South Africa "to participate in negotiations with the Governments of India and Pakistan with regard to the treatment of people of Indian origin in the Union of South Africa." A solution to this problem, it said, should be in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Suez - A resolution adopted by the General Assembly by a vote of 54 in favor, none against, with 19 abstentions, "endorses the recommendation of the Secretary General ... that ... a surcharge of 3 per cent on Canal traffic would be paid by all shipping and trade using the Canal into a special United Nations account." The repayment of costs of clearing the Canal amounting to $8,376,042 will be made to the countries which furnished the financial outlay. The procedures governing such payments will be worked out with the Government of Egypt and with other parties to the payments.

V. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTIONS ON REFUGEES

The General Assembly by a vote of 66 to 0, with 9 abstentions, continued the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for five years from January 1, 1959. Other actions include the passage of an item by a vote of 63 to 0, with 10 abstentions, for an intensification of the UN Refugee Fund program. Operations of this fund would be halted after December 31, 1958 and the UN High Commissioner would be authorized to establish an emergency fund of not more than $500,000 for European Refugees. An appeal for aid to Chinese refugees in Hong Kong was issued by the Assembly to member nations. By a vote of 52 to 0, with 19 abstentions, the Assembly adopted a resolution asking governments to ease the plight of more than 900,000 Arab refugees. The Secretary General was requested to obtain about $19,000,000 for United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East during the year 1958.

REVIEW: The New United Nations. Ernest A. Gross, former U.S. Ambassador to the UN, delegate to five General Assembly sessions and former Assistant Secretary of State has written The New United Nations, a booklet in the Foreign Policy Association "Headline Series" F.P.A., 345 E. 46th St. New York 17, N.Y.; 35¢. Mr. Gross writes from unusual first-hand experience in the United Nations, analyzes the general significance of changes which have taken place in structure and function within the UN and the meaning of these developments for the United States as a participant and a leader in the organization. For those pursuing further a systematic and meaningful study of the United Nations, a discussion guide is added at the end of Mr. Gross' booklet. It presents "discussion topics, reading references, and recommended visual aids arranged for a series of eight meetings" of a study group.

Mr. Gross views the UN as a visible organization capable of institutional adjustment to the dynamics of international life today. He refers to it as "The Ever New United Nations" and suggests that pressures brought to bear on the UN since its formation have forged it "into more durable shape." Perhaps the hardest blow of all was the Communist invasion of Korea; it led to the Uniting for Peace Resolution of November 3, 1950, which significantly recorded the failure of the Security Council to "exercise its primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and for negotiating agreements for armed forces under article 43 of the Charter." The resolution, Mr. Gross observes, ushered in a significant trend in UN affairs by asserting that "such failure does not deprive the General Assembly of its rights or relieve it of its responsibilities under the Charter in regard to the maintenance of international peace and security."

The Peace Observation Commission, or, as it has been called "the eyes and ears of the United Nations," proved its usefulness at the time of the Korean invasion on June 25, 1950. But the POC idea has atrophied from non-use during later crises. Mr. Gross feels that this is due to "the fear - not solely confined to the Soviet delegation - that the POC might be employed in areas or situationsin derogation of the domestic jurisdiction clauses of Article 2 (7) of the Charter."

Although the U.S. has gained a wide measure of support at the UN, there is no truth to the Russian charge that we enjoy "an automatic majority." Support for the U.S. at the UN is gained, Mr. Gross says, "through the justice of its cause and the logic of its arguments."

Mr. Gross is careful to point out that the so-called "Afro-Asian Bloc" is not considered a bloc by many Asian leaders. Professor Bokhari, Ambassador from Pakistan to the UN described Afro-Asian solidarity at the UN as ". . . a general coalescence of certain interests which, because of past history and tradition, certain nations have come to have in common." These center around the emotional context of racial problems, colonialism, and low living standards.

A significant trend in UN work is the enhanced prestige of the Secretary General in his executive function due, in part, to his effectiveness at the time of the Suez crisis. Mr. Gross predicts the future role of the Secretary General will be while pledging his office "to respond to calls for leadership", to admonish the General Assembly "to carry out its full duty."

The New United Nations is being highly commended among those interested in the UN and it is expected that Mr. Gross' booklet will have unusually wide circulation. In view of the character of this study booklet, the fact that Mr. Gross is Chairman of the Department of International Affairs of the National Council of Churches, and the esteem in which he is held in many part of the world, it is anticipated that it will be extensively used in the ecumenical movement, among denominations and in countless local churches.

REVIEW - Century of the Homeless Man: Elfan Rees, Representative in Europe of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, an Advisor on refugee affairs to the World Council of Churches, is the author of this booklet, No. 515, (November 1957, in the International Conciliation series published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. (Order from Columbia University Press, 2960 Broadway, New York 27, N.Y. $.25; also quantity rates.)

The chapters include incisive discussion of The Harsh Facts, The Consequences, The Cures, The Response to the Issues, Lessons of the Hungarian Crisis, What of the Future?

The series editor says that Dr. Rees in this booklet "describes one of the great tragedies of our age - forty million men, women, and children for whom there is no shelter and no security, only the vast indifference of states whose borders and pocketbooks alike are closed."

Dr. Rees indicates that his title is no new phrase, but that the reality behind it is "not very widely recognized."

In an Epilogue he points out that "almost a million more persons entered the limbo of refugeedom" during the past year, and "despite valiant efforts to find solutions, we cannot keep pace." "The one note of optimism" he says, "is to be found in the near solution of the Hungarian refugee problem. What can be done once can surely be done again." The final note he strikes, however, is that of "continuing tragedy."

UN SUBCOMMISSION APPROVES RESOLUTION ON RELIGIOUS RIGHTS AND PRACTICES. The Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on January 28 adopted a resolution concerning discrimination in religious rights and practices. This Subcommission of the Commission on Human Rights is part of the work of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 10 in favor, none against, with no abstentions. Arcot Krishnaswami of India, Special Rapporteur on religious discrimination, was present but did not participate in the voting.

The resolution, among other things, states that a reconsideration by the Secretary General of his decision regarding publication of the "country studies" on religious discrimination would be appreciated by the Subcommission "as a highly important and positive contribution to the success of its work and to the attainment of the objectives pursued by the various United Nations organs for the preparation of studies of discrimination." It expresses hope that the Special Rapporteur will complete his final report in time for it to be considered by the Subcommission at its 1959 session.

Mr. Krishnaswami said it would be very difficult to have the country reports scheduled for completion by the end of 1958. Even if all preliminary surveys were completed, these would have to go to the governments concerned and it might not be possible for him, as Special Rapporteur, to draft his final report in time for the 1959 Subcommission. The studies, he said, involved a great deal of work and research. The country studies, he added, must be included in the final report.

The completed study on religious rights and practices is to be based upon 84 "country reports" prepared by the Secretariat under the direction of the Special Rapporteur, and on the comments on those reports received from the governments concerned. To date 30 country reports have been drafted, of these 14 have been approved by Mr. Krishnaswami and forwarded to the respective governments. Approximately 50 have yet to be started.

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